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THE WORKS OF THE AMERICAN ETCHERS.

X.—ALFRED BRENNAN.



ALFRED BRENNAN is a young designer, some of whose work has appeared in the magazines. He was born in Louisville, Ky., February 14th, 1853, and has been for some time a resident of New York. The etching published with this notice, entitled *Divination in Tea-Leaves*, is not the only one he has made; but, with commendable modesty, he thinks his other plates "quite too weak to merit any mention," and prefers, therefore, not to publish a list of them. He intends, however, to continue to ply the needle, and hopes to turn out work in future which will be more to his own satisfaction.

The present plate is a good example of the tendencies of many of our young art-students. These tendencies can be summed up in a few words: Picturesqueness and suggestiveness first, academical correctness afterwards—if at all! It is evident that the figure of the woman who is seeking to peer into the future through the oracle of the tea-cup is not the work of a severe and faultless draughtsman; but the action is so well suggested, even in the curiously twisted right arm, and there is such a charm of picturesqueness thrown about it, that the defects in drawing seem to lose much of their unpleasantness, although they can never be wholly neutralized. But—in the present artistic mood of the public, at least—it is questionable whether this picturesqueness would not be preferred to correctness, if the one had to be sacrificed to the other. The triumph of the young artist will be to retain his picturesque qualities, and to combine with them those qualities which at present are lacking. If he succeeds in reaching this aim, his future work will not fail to be wholly satisfactory.

S. R. KOEHLER.

IN THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

PAINTED BY KARL HOFF. ETCHED BY F. L. MEYER.



THE subject of this picture is of that "literary" nature which is so vigorously condemned by those who advocate "painting, simply for the sake of painting." But the popularity of artists like Karl Hoff (of whose works not a few are found in America) and his master Vautier goes to show that there are still a good many people who have not yet been converted to this latest gospel of art. The etching, a careful, conscientious piece of work, although lacking somewhat in freedom, was executed by a young German artist, F. L. Meyer, born in 1842, who followed the calling of a wood-engraver until about the year 1872. This point is worth emphasizing. America needs a few good reproductive etchers, and they are more likely to be found in the ranks of the many excellent artists who at present give their entire attention to the wood-block than anywhere else. Hecht, of Munich, is another instance of a reproductive artist who cultivates wood-engraving as well as etching. Will not some of our engravers profit by these examples?

S. R. K.